

Environmental Modifications

Definition

Environmental Modifications are physical adaptations to a privately owned residence occupied by a HASCI Waiver participant which are necessary to address medical needs, assure health and safety, and/or enable greater independence. It may include installation of wheelchair ramps and grab-bars, widening of doorways, modification of bathroom or kitchen facilities, floor covering to facilitate wheelchair access, outside paving or fencing necessary for a participant's safety, and installation of specialized electric and plumbing systems necessary to accommodate medical equipment.

The service may include prior consultation and assessment to determine specific needs and follow-up inspections upon completion of the modifications. It may also include necessary repair of previous Environmental Modifications funded by the HASCI Waiver.

Service Unit

The unit for Environmental Modifications is the specific adaptation, equipment, or associated service (consultation/assessment, follow-up inspection, repair, etc.) that is authorized.

There is no set rate for Environmental Modifications, as adaptations/repairs must be individually priced.

The rate for Environmental Modifications Consultation/Assessment is \$400.

The rate for Environmental Modifications Follow-up Inspection is \$100.

Service Limit / Restrictions

Environmental Modifications are subject to the guidelines established by the SCDDSN Head and Spinal Cord Injury Division (*Guidance for Environmental and Private Vehicle Modifications*) and must be within the limit of \$20,000 per modification.

Environmental Modifications will not be approved solely to meet needs or convenience of caregivers or other occupants of the home. Modifications to publicly-funded group homes or other residential facilities are not permitted.

Excluded from Environmental Modifications are repairs or improvements to the home which are of general utility such as maintenance of foundation, roof, and electrical, plumbing, and heating/cooling systems, repair of water, termite, or other types of damage, and provision of flooring/carpeting, interior/exterior painting, and landscaping.

Environmental Modifications cannot be allowed as financial assistance for any phase of new home construction or major home renovation. Modifications that add to total square footage of a home are rarely authorized, and only if it is the most cost-effective alternative.

Repair of home modifications obtained from other funding sources or privately paid by or for the HASCI Waiver participant will be considered only if necessary to assure the participant's health and safety or otherwise justified as essential. The repair must be more cost-effective than HASCI Waiver funding of new or replacement home modifications.

Environmental Modifications are subject to all applicable state and local building codes.

In accordance with the South Carolina Consolidated Procurement Code, SCDDSN directive 250-08-DD, *Procurement Requirements for Local DSN Boards*, applies to all procurement activities supported in whole or in part by SCDDSN funding, including *Environmental* Modifications funded by HASCI Waiver. Providers contracted with SCDDSN must establish and follow procurement policies and procedures with requirements at least as restrictive as those contained in this directive. Directive 250-08-DD can be accessed on the SCDDSN website: www.ddsn.sc.gov >About DDSN >Directives and Standards >Current DDSN Directives

Providers

Environmental Modifications may be provided by the following:

- Vendor enrolled with SCDHHS as a Durable Medical Equipment (DME) provider
A DME provider enrolled with SCDHHS must directly bill SCDHHS; it cannot bill to a participant's SCDDSN Financial Manager agency
- DSB Board or DDSN-contracted provider. The provider may employ or contract with the following, but is responsible to verify and document licensure:
 - Contractor licensed by the South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (LLR) that is not enrolled with SCDHHS as a DME provider

- Vendor with a retail or wholesale business license that is not enrolled with SCDHHS as a DME provider

In addition to the above, the provider may employ or contract with the following for consultation, assessment, and/or follow-up inspection; the provider is responsible to verify and document licensure or certification:

- Licensed Occupational Therapist
- Licensed Physical Therapist
- Rehabilitation Engineering Technologist (RET) certified by Rehabilitation Engineering Society of North American (RESNA)
- Assistive Technology Practitioner (ATP) certified by Rehabilitation Engineering Society of North American (RESNA)
- ATP Supplier certified by Rehabilitation Engineering Society of North American (RESNA)
- Environmental Access Consultant/contractor certified by Professional Resources in Management (PRIME)

Arranging and Authorizing the Service

The Service Coordinator must follow the HASCI Division *Guidelines for Environmental and Private Vehicle Modifications* when processing a request for Environmental Modifications funded by HASCI Waiver. This must include preliminary discussions with the participant and his or her family or representative to identify desired modifications and explain required policies and procedures. These discussions must be documented in Service Notes.

After a need for home modifications has been identified and documented in the participant's Support Plan, the Service Coordinator must first determine if needed modifications can be obtained through the participant's private insurance, Worker's Compensation, Special Needs Trust, Medicare, Medicaid State Plan, or any other funding. The Service Coordinator must document in Service Notes efforts to obtain modifications through other funding sources available to the participant. If not available from other sources, Environmental Modifications funded by HASCI Waiver can be pursued.

In most circumstances, Environmental Modifications Consultation/Assessment will first be necessary to clearly define the participant's functional needs, status of the home, feasible options, and specifications for appropriate modifications.

This is required for all major bathroom, kitchen, and flooring modifications and for extensive ramping.

If it is determined that Environmental Modifications Consultation/Assessment is needed, the participant or representative must be offered choice from among qualified providers. Offering of provider choice and the provider(s) selected must be documented in a Service Note.

The participant's Support Plan must be updated to clearly reflect the name of the service and payer, the amount, frequency, and duration of the service, and the provider type(s). Budget information for the service must then be entered into the Waiver Tracking System (WTS) and service information must be entered into the Service Tracking System (STS).

To initiate the service following WTS processing, authorization must be forwarded to the provider using *Authorization for Environmental Modifications* (HASCI Form 12L). *This can be accessed via the SCDDSN Application Portal >Business Tools >Forms >HASCI Waiver.* A copy must be maintained in the participant's file.

After an Environmental Modifications Consultation/Assessment has been completed, the Service Coordinator must review the findings/specifications with the Central Office HASCI Division before soliciting a price quote or bids for the project. In some situations, additional assessments or other actions may be necessary before proceeding.

If the HASCI Division agrees that the findings/specifications seem appropriate, the Service Coordinator will be notified by fax or e-mail to proceed with obtaining a price quote or bids. Receipt of this notification must be documented in a Service Note and a copy of the fax or e-mail must be maintained in the participant's file.

To determine a provider for Environmental Modifications, **State procurement policy must be followed as appropriate:**

- For any single item (service) costing \$2500 or less, it is only necessary to get one (1) price quote from a qualified provider chosen by the participant or representative. Solicitation of the price quote may be written or verbal. The price quote submitted may be verbal, but it must be documented in a Service Note. If the price quote is written, it must be maintained in the participant's record.
- For any single item (service) costing \$2500.01 to \$10,000, the participant or representative must select at least three (3) qualified providers to give a price quote. Solicitation and submission of price quotes may be written and/or verbal. Verbal price quotes must be documented in a Service Note. Written price quotes must be maintained in the participant's record. The provider

with the lowest price quote (pre-tax amount) that meets all specifications for the item (service) must be selected.

- For any single item (service) costing \$10,000.01 or more, procurement must be advertised in the South Carolina Business Opportunities (SCBO) magazine and/or local newspapers. At least three (3) written bids must be solicited from different qualified providers. All bids received from qualified providers must be maintained in the participant's record. The provider with the lowest bid (pre-tax amount) that meets all specifications for the item must be selected.

After the provider of Environmental Modifications is determined, the participant's Support Plan must be updated to clearly reflect the name of the service and payer, the amount, frequency, and duration of the service, and the provider type. Budget information for the service must then be entered into the Waiver Tracking System (WTS), including a comment that cites all price quotes or bids that were obtained.

For a modification costing \$2500.01 or more, copies of the price quotes or bids (or other documentation) must be forwarded to the Central Office HASCI Division.

To initiate the service following WTS processing, authorization must be forwarded to the vendor or provider using *Authorization for Environmental Modifications* (HASCI Form 12L).

This can be accessed via the SCDDSN Application Portal >Business Tools >Forms >HASCI Waiver. A copy must be maintained in the participant's file.

In the case of major bathroom or kitchen modifications, extensive ramping, and other complex projects, an Environmental Modifications Follow-up Inspection may be necessary to confirm the project was completed according to specifications. Typically, this is done by the same provider who previously did the Environmental Modifications Consultation/Assessment for the project.

If it is determined that an Environmental Modifications Follow-up Inspection is needed, the participant or representative must be offered choice from among qualified providers. Offering of provider choice and the provider selected must be documented in a Service Note.

The participant's Support Plan must be updated to clearly reflect the name of the service and payer, the amount, frequency, and duration of the service, and the provider type. Budget information for the service must then be entered into the Waiver Tracking System (WTS) and service information must be entered into the Service Tracking System (STS).

To initiate the service following WTS processing, authorization must be forwarded to the provider using *Authorization for Environmental Modifications* (HASCI Form 12L). *This can be accessed via the SCDDSN Application Portal >Business Tools >Forms >HASCI Waiver.* A copy must be maintained in the participant's file.

Billing

If the authorized vendor is enrolled with SCDHHS as a DME provider, the service must be Direct-bill to SCDHHS. This must be indicated on the *Authorization for Environmental Modifications* (HASCI Form 12L); a prior authorization number must be assigned.

If the authorized vendor, contractor, or provider is not enrolled with SCDHHS as a DME provider, the service must be Board-billed to the participant's SCDDSN Financial Manager agency. This must be indicated on *Authorization for Environmental Modifications* (HASCI Form 12L); no prior authorization number is required.

- The Financial Manager agency is responsible for maintaining documentation that the service was rendered as billed.
- The Financial Manager agency must follow *Procedures to Report and Bill for Board-Based Services Provided to HASCI Waiver Recipients* to receive reimbursement from SCDDSN. *This can be accessed via the SCDDSN Application Portal >Business Tools >Forms >Finance Manual Chapter 10, Section 10-14.*

Monitorship

The Service Coordinator must monitor provision of each HASCI Waiver service received by a participant to:

- verify the service is being provided as authorized,
- assure the usefulness and effectiveness of the service,
- determine the participant's and/or representative's satisfaction with the service and service provider(s), and
- confirm health status and safety of the participant.

Monitorship includes:

- Contact with the participant and/or representative within two (2) weeks after beginning the service or beginning with a new provider of the service,
- For Environmental Modifications, the Service Coordinator is required to make an on-site visit to observe the modifications within two (2) weeks following completion; the visit and observation of the modifications must be

documented in a Service Note, to include a statement regarding completion of the modifications as specified and satisfaction of the participant and/or representative, *This requirement does not apply to consultation/assessment, repairs, or follow-up inspection related to Environmental Modifications.*

- Contact with the participant and/or representative at least bi-monthly (every other month),
- Contact with service providers as necessary to confirm health status and safety of the participant and appropriate provision of authorized services,
- Face-to-face visit with the participant at least every six (6) months (180 days), and
- Review of the participant's Support Plan as often as needed, but at least every six (6) months (180 days).

Monitoring contacts, face-to-face visits, and review of the participant's Support Plan must be documented in Service Notes.

Information obtained during monitoring may lead to changes in authorized HASCI Waiver services, such as increased/decreased units, change of provider, or change to a more appropriate service.

Service Denial, Reduction, Suspension, and Termination

If a HASCI Waiver participant is denied a service that was requested or denied an increase in units of a service already authorized, the Service Coordinator must provide written notification to the participant or legal guardian, including reason for denial. Information concerning SCDDSN Reconsideration and SCDHHS Appeal must also be provided.

If a participant's authorized units of a HASCI Waiver service must be reduced, temporarily suspended, or indefinitely terminated, the Service Coordinator must provide written notification to the participant or legal guardian, including reason for the action. Information concerning SCDDSN Reconsideration and SCDHHS Appeal must also be provided.

Except when the action was requested by the participant or legal guardian or if the action is due to the participant's death, admission to a hospital or nursing facility, or loss of Medicaid and/or HASCI Waiver eligibility, there must be at least 10 calendar days between the date of notification and effective date of the action.

Written notification to the participant or legal guardian is made using the following forms, which are also used to notify each affected service provider of the action:

- *Notice of Denial of Service* (HASCI Form 11C)
- *Notice of Reduction of Service* (HASCI Form 11A)
- *Notice of Suspension of Service* (HASCI Form 11B)
- *Notice of Termination of Service* (HASCI Form 11)

These can be accessed via the SCDDSN Application Portal>Business Tools>Forms>HASCI Waiver.

When the action becomes effective, the participant's Support Plan must be updated and budget information in the Waiver Tracking System (WTS) must be adjusted accordingly. For service reduction or termination, excess or unused units must be deleted from the budget. Service information must be updated in the Service Tracking System (STS) as necessary.